

PRESS RELEASE

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MARSHALL COUNTY CONTRACTOR SENTENCED ON WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD

CHARLESTON, WV – West Virginia Insurance Commissioner, Jane L. Cline, announced today that Richard Custer, Jr., was sentenced October 12, 2005 on one felony charge of making a false statement to the Workers' Compensation Commission.

Custer, of Marshall County, attested on an application for coverage filed with the Workers' Compensation Commission that he first had employees working in West Virginia in July of 2000; however, an employee's report of a work-related injury in February of 2000 prompted an investigation.

"Evidence indicated that Custer had employees in his contracting business since August of 1999 without subscribing to the Workers' Compensation Commission" Cline said. "West Virginia employers who fail to subscribe, or who fail to make timely and accurate reports and payments to the Workers' Compensation Commission are subject to criminal prosecution."

Custer was sentenced to one to three years confinement in a state prison; however, the sentence was suspended and Custer was placed on two years supervised probation.

Businesses regularly employing persons in West Virginia are required to subscribe to and pay premiums to the West Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission for protection of their employees. Workers' compensation provides medical, disability, and rehabilitation benefits to workers who suffer injury or disease in the course of and resulting from their covered employment.

Anyone with information relating to a suspected case of Workers' Compensation Fraud is urged to call, toll-free, 1-888-372-8392.

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